THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) As per information available with the Army, 73 persons (60 army personnel and 13 civilians) have lost their lives and 216 persons (132 army personnel & 84 civilians) have been injured in mine related accidents.

(b) and (c) Out of the amount of Rs. 83.55 crore sanctioned so far, an amount of Rs. 37.60 crore has since been reimbursed as compensation to the affected persons for the loss/damage of crop due to laying of mines by the Army. The Board of Officers of the Army along with the representatives of the local revenue authorities carry out the requisite surveys and recommend the assessed amount of compensation to the concerned authorities for this pupose.

**Damage to standing crops in the border areas due to deployment of army**

1516. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the standing crops of border areas has been destroyed in various States due to deployment of army;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have provided any compensation and financial assistance to the affected farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(e) whether the above compensation/financial assistance are sufficient;

(f) if not, whether Government are considering to provide more compensation and financial assistance to the farmers;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) if not, thereasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (h) Reports of damages to the standing crops of the farmers/ people residing in the border areas of Rajasthan, Punjab and J&K due to current mobilization of troops in these areas, have come to the notice of the Government.

2. Board of Officers have been ordered by the Army Authorities to conduct joint surveys in association with the representatives of Directorate General of Defence Estates and Local Revenue Authorities to assess the damages occured to the crops. The details of damages occurred to the crops of the farmers would be known after the joint surveys are completed.

3. However, in order to give immediate relief to the farmers for the damages occurred to their crops, a sum of Rs. 36 crores, which is 25% of the amount projected by the State Revenue Authorities as loss towards the crops, has been sanctioned to the State Government of Punjab as "on account" payment to be made to the farmers. Out of this, about a sum of Rs. 21 crores has already been disbursed to the affected people/ farmers. Another sum of Rs. 30 crores has also been sanctioned to the State Government of Punjab as compensation to the damages occurred to the crops, on the recommendations of Army HQrs.

4. A sum of Rs. 13.80 crores, which is 25% of the amount projected by the State Revenue Authorities as loss towards the crops, has been sanctioned to the State Government of Rajasthan as "on account" payment to be made to the individual to the affected people/farmers. Similarly, a sum of Rs. 3.75 crores, which is 25% of the amount projected by HQ Northern Command as loss towards the crops, has been sanctioned to the State Government of J&K as "on account" payment to be made to the individual farmers.

5. The payment made to the people/farmers will be adjursted against the final projections to be submitted by the Board of Officers constituted for the purpose by the Local Military Authorities.

**Vacancies in the Army**

1517. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of vacancies in officer cadre in the Army alongwith time since when the vacancies are laying unfilled;

(b) the reasons for the vacancies lying unfilled; and

(c) the fresh steps taken/proposed to be taken by Govenment to fill up all the vacancies in officer cadre in Army?